

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 20, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *y*

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE PUBLIC RECORDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

ISSUE: Receipt of the Annual Report from the Public Records Advisory Commission.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council receive the report of the Public Records Advisory Commission and thank the Commission for their efforts on behalf of the City.

DISCUSSION: The Public Records Advisory Commission has prepared a report detailing the activities of the Commission from July 2004 through June 2005. During this period, the Commission held seven regularly scheduled meetings to discuss public records management issues. The Commission worked on several projects during this twelve-month period:

1. Public Records Management Program. The Commission recommends obtaining a grant to help process the Davis and Ruffner Land Records, a collection of 730 boxes that was donated to the Archives & Records Center and currently stored in Springfield, VA at a commercial storage facility. Several possible sources of funding were discussed.
2. E-mail and Electronic Records. Strategies for training City of Alexandria employees on the proper use of e-mail in order to comply with the Virginia Public Records Act (sec. 42.1-82) were discussed. Suggestions included working closely with ITS, making e-mail management a part of the City's new employee orientation program, and distributing a flyer outlining the City's e-mail policies to all City employees.
3. Alexandria History Award. The Commission nominated Ruth Lincoln Kaye for the 2005 Alexandria History Award.
4. Mobile Shelving. Seventy-five thousand dollars, through the City's Capital Improvement Program, is available to purchase mobile shelving for one of the records storage rooms on the ground floor at the Archives & Records Center. The shelving is expected to increase the storage capacity in that room by more than fifty percent. The Commission discussed various shelving schemes, particularly those that would minimize the cost to the City.

5. Records Management Software. Fifty thousand dollars has been allocated for the purchase of new records management software to replace the current software that was purchased in 1996. The Commission discussed various software programs.

6. Commission Membership. Two members resigned from the Commission and two new members were appointed. There is one vacancy.

ATTACHMENT: Annual Report of the Public Records Advisory Commission.

STAFF:

Jean Taylor Federico, Director, Office of Historic Alexandria
Jackie Cohan, Records Administrator & Archivist
Rose Williams Boyd, FOIA Officer

PUBLIC RECORDS ADVISORY COMMISSION

Annual Report to the City Council July 2004 - June 2005

The Public Records Advisory Commission (PRAC) provides advice and guidance to the City Records Administrator and Archivist on records management matters and implementation of the records program in the City. The Commission is authorized to have seven citizen members appointed by the City Council for terms of two years. It is composed of professional archivists, records managers, historians, research specialists, and citizens.

During the period July 2004 - June 2005 the PRAC held seven meetings. Each meeting had an agenda and was open to the public.

Discussion of Grant for Processing Land Records

The PRAC discussed with the City Records Administrator and Archivist possible means of obtaining a grant to help to process the Davis and Ruffner land records, which have been stored in the City Archives and Records Center.

Electronic Records

Strategies for the training of City employees on electronic records, which also encompass E-mail, were discussed. The strategies included new-employee orientation in electronic records policies and the production of a flyer.

Nomination for 2005 Alexandria History Award

The PRAC nominated Ms. Ruth Lincoln Kaye for the 2005 Alexandria History Award.

Mobile Shelving

Members of the PRAC made suggestions regarding the procurement of new mobile shelving for the City Archives and Records Center.

Records Management Software

The PRAC discussed various possible new records management software to be purchased and installed at the City Archives and Records Center.

Commission Membership

The PRAC has one vacancy. Jessica Branco and Nils Kandelin joined the PRAC during the

reporting period, and Mark St. Mary left. Martha Crawley announced at the final meeting of the reporting period that she will not seek re-appointment to the PRAC. A unanimous resolution of thanks to Ms. Crawley for her excellent and valuable contributions to the work of the PRAC during the last six years was passed.

The following citizens served on the PRAC during the period covered in this report:

Jessica Branco
Martha Crawley (resigned as Chairman September 14, 2004)
Alice Fierstein
Clarence Henley
Sanford Horn
Nils Kandelin
Mark St. Mary
Charles Ziegler (elected Chairman September 14, 2004)

Respectfully submitted,

Charles Ziegler, Chairman
Jessica Branco
Alice Fierstein
Clarence Henley
Sanford Horn
Nils Kandelin